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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6295  
INFO RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY 0159  
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 3202  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 0280  
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0329  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0339  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0020  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 1389  
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 0011  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0310  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0052  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 000845

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SUBJECT: TANZANIA: VIEWS ON ERITREA-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY  
IMPASSE

REF: SECSTATE 076306

Classified By: DCM D. Purnell Delly for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

Tanzania will support, but not lead, efforts to resolve  
impasse  
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¶1. (C) On June 11, the Deputy Chief of Mission raised the Eritrea-Ethiopia boundary impasse with Ambassador Charles Sanga, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (reftel). Sanga described the issue as a regional one to be addressed within the African Union (AU). He told the DCM that President Jakaya Kikwete wants to encourage peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and has influence in the AU to do so.

¶2. (C) Recalling President Kikwete's outspoken opposition to Bashir as AU Chairman (comment: and perhaps Kikwete's role in recent SADC mediation efforts with Mugabe), Sanga explained that "some quarters believe that Tanzania is trying to become famous" as a peacemaker by meddling in other states' affairs - a reputation Tanzania is anxious to avoid. As such, Tanzania is willing to support action within the AU to resolve the boundary impasse, but is not inclined to play a highly visible role. The DCM replied that the United States was reluctant to play a lead role itself at the moment, and therefore looked to widely-respected African leaders such as Kikwete to help break the impasse, suggesting Kikwete could raise the dispute informally with Isaiah or Meles when they next meet.

Boundary dispute "camouflaging" bigger conflict: Somalia  
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¶3. (C) Sanga stated that the relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia has been complicated by both countries' interest in Somalia, and that the boundary dispute is now "camouflaging" this larger conflict between the two. The boundary dispute must be addressed in the context of Somalia if progress is to be made, he said, although he questioned whether Eritrea and Ethiopia were ready to resolve the issue.

The DCM emphasized that it was precisely because Somalia had raised tensions between the two countries that a first confidence-building measure of some kind was important. While the odds were long, first steps of whatever nature to resolving the boundary dispute might lead to longer term relaxation of tensions between the two countries, an objective all countries in the region share.

¶4. (C) Sanga noted that there is a "problem from within" Eritrea, referring to the will of President Isaias Afwerki to end the impasse, and he criticized Eritrea for harboring Somalis affiliated with the Islamic Courts. However, he stated that because Ethiopia is the larger player, it should take the lead in resolving the various issues between the two countries.

¶5. (C) Sanga said Tanzania continued to attach importance to UNMEE, and would support renewal of its mandate.  
DELLY